A FURTHER DEFENCE OF PRIESTCRAFT:

BEING

A Practical Improvement of the SHAVER's SERMON on the Expulsion of Six Young Gentlemen from the UNIVERSITY of OXFORD, for Praying, Reading, and Expounding the Scriptures.

OCCASIONED BY

A Vindication of that PIOUS ACT by a Member of the UNIVERSITY.

Inscribed to

Mr. V— C— and the H—ds of H—s,

By their humble Servant

THE SHAVER.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for G. KEITH, in Gracechurch-street, and J. JOHNSON, in Pater-noster-row. 1768.

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HAVING again taken my pen in hand in the name of *high* CHURCH, I muſt inform my readers, that my late endeavours to ſerve the clergy have been very acceptable to the world, and have had no ſmall honours conferred on them by men of reverence and learning; for I am very credibly informed, that my Sermon has had the honor of being grinned at by ſeveral ghoſtly guides of the D. D. rank, of more denominations than one; for it may be obſerved, that ſome doctors, who have never a ſurplice to wear, have of late years been very ſtrenuous for high church principles, and are every whit as zealous for uniformity as the clergy

of ancient Babylon were, and as fond of impoſing creeds and confeſſions as ever Sacheverel was. Well the D. D.'s of this high church party of all denominations have, it ſeems, found themſelves aggrieved at the many-linked chain which I have given of the uniformity of religion among the clergy, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of G—— III.; and as it can never be for the intereſt of prieſtcraft that the world ſhould know that the clergy have their honours from men, and that the doctor's diploma does not come from heaven, they were a little chagrined at the liberties which the SHAVER had taken with ſuch a ſacred and reverend order of prieſts; and I do not for my part blame them, for if you will gall a d— he will certainly wince.

However, I muſt inform my hearers, that in this day promotion of this ſort among ſome folks cometh not from the eaſt, nor from the weſt, nor from the ſouth, and therefore it comes from the north, namely from ABERDEEN. You'll obſerve they do not go there to receive it, but it is generouſly ſent to them by perſons whom they never ſaw nor ſpoke with in their days, and therefore does not a little add to the dignity of the receiver.

It is thought that the Apoſtles would have been in much higher eſteem with our dignified clergymen than they are, if their *birth and education had given them the rank of gentlemen*, and if they had not been *brought up in the loweſt of trades* before converſion; eſpecially if they had not contented themſelves with being called by the plain names of Paul, Peter, &c. but had annexed D. D. or prefixed Rt. Rev. to their proper names. And indeed it muſt be owned,

that

that it would have been much more courtly and clerical in Paul to have begun his epiſtles thus: HIS GRACE, THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD PAUL LORD ARCHBISHOP OF ALL THE CHURCHES, *to the Saints and Faithful*, &c. *which are at*, &c. But he having nothing elſe to mind but true Chriſtianity, which he knew could never be linked with worldly honours, contented himſelf with ſeeking the ſalvation of ſinners, and left it to others to aggrandize themſelves with ſacerdotal TITLES.

Another part of the Apoſtles conduct, which it is thought has given great umbrage to ſome folks, is their not attempting to form any eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, which might become a ſtate religion, ſo that national eſtabliſhments might have been defended from the New Teſtament inſtead of human ſtatutes and canons; but this was left by them unattempted, to the great mortification of the high church, and to the no ſmall advantage of the low party, who are very apt to fly to the Apoſtles conduct for arguments to defend low church principles.

But not to dwell upon theſe things, my purpoſe is to point out the excellencies of a late little pamphlet, intituled, *A vindication of the proceedings againſt the ſix members of E — Hall, Oxford. Inſcribed to the Rev. Dr. Durell, vice-chancellor of the univerſity, and to the worthy aſſeſſors at E — Hall, by a gentleman, member of, and ſincere well-wiſher to, the univerſity. May 14th*, 1768, *London*. And I aſſure you that, from all the accounts we have had either from the Oxonians or Antioxonians, it appears to be a deed of charity to vindicate thoſe gentlemens proceedings, ſeeing common ſenſe and religion will

will be ſure to act the part of remonſtrants here. And I think it is no ſmall honour to that learned body to have ſuch an able member to vindicate their *proceedings*, and ſo generous as to attempt it.

Zeal for the honour of the univerſity warmed the breaſt of the learned VINDICATOR in ſuch a manner, that, being eager to ſerve the intereſts of his brethren, his errata well nigh equals the number of pages in his learned vindication, the former being *twelve* and the latter only *ſixteen*; an inſtance rarely paralleled even by writers whoſe birth and education does not give them the *rank of gentlemen*, but who are *brought up to the loweſt of trades*, as the rev. Vindicator obſerves. It was the opinion of FESTUS concerning Paul, that much learning had made him mad, and I fear if Feſtus had lived in our days he would have concluded that *much learning makes ſome people d——s*. As you know a *learned d——* and a PEDANT are names ſignifying the ſame thing. It is ſomething of a pity, however, that this learned body had not a little corrected the preſs; for this is a critical age, as we Shavers obſerve.

But this judicious and learned Vindicator makes us ample amends for all theſe little inaccuracies by his ſovereign contempt of the ſcriptures; ſcorning to be beholden to them for a ſingle quotation in defence of the proceedings againſt thoſe ſix *delinquents* who were expelled from E— Hall by the V— C— and the heads of houſes; but like a man of erudition has recourſe to books of more approved authenticity; namely, CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS; a book better by one half ſuited to his purpoſe,

purpoſe, and fitter to promote the intereſts of the CLERGY.

From hence we may note, I. That this gentleman's opinion of the authority of ſcripture in ſuch caſes is ſufficiently mean, and therefore he thought them not worthy of his quoti g; or that he was conſcious, that whatever *Corpus Statutorum Univerſitatis* might do, that the Bible afforded nothing that would vindicate the conduct of the Rev. V— C— and the heads of houſes in this particular, and therefore could not quote it: the latter of which is thought to be the caſe. But although Paul and Peter, &c. in the Bible are not brought in as vouchers for the V— C—'s cauſe, Jack, in the Tale of the Tub, and old biting Juvenal, our old pagan brother, have the honour of being introduced.

But this is not to be wondered at when we conſider that the TALE OF A TUB was wrote by a rev. clergyman, and therefore was ſure to have the preference to the Bible, which was written moſtly, and the New Teſtament wholly, by laymen, to the no ſmall grief of ſome fathers in black.

II. From hence we may ſee the diſaffection of our learned Vindicator towards the compilers of the New Teſtament; and no wonder he is diſaffected towards them, when we conſider that thoſe compilers did not ſtudy the good of the church, ſo as to found univerſities for the training of clergymen, nor provided any ſtatutes for their ſafety when wiſer men had eſtabliſhed them; but ſhut up the canon of ſcripture without making any proviſion for the honour and dignity of the clergy of our univerſities. Had the ſcriptures been deemed a perfect rule of faith

and

and practice we ſhould have had no CREEDS, no CONFESSIONS OF FAITH, no CANONS, no CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS. — How wonderful is the wiſdom of the wiſe who can ſo readily perfect what the apoſtles left lacking!

III. This gentleman, in his very friendly vindication, has acted with more moderate pretenſions than many reverend writers have done. They would perſuade us that they are deſcended in a direct line from the Apoſtles; but the Vindicator does not ſeem to ſuſpect that there is the leaſt alliance betwixt them and his reverence; but joins himſelf with company by far more ſuitable for him, I mean the gentlemen lawyers who drew up the ſtatutes of the univerſity. And indeed we country folk wonder to ſee reverend, right reverend, and moſt reverend parſons, *whoſe birth and education give them the rank of gentlemen*, pretending to be deſcended from laymen and fiſhermen. But wonders never ceaſe.

This is a long introduction, and ſhall for the preſent ſerve. Proceed we therefore to the Vindication itſelf, page 1. *To profeſs openly our religious principles, and to worſhip God in ſuch manner as ſeems to us moſt acceptable to him, are juſtly eſteemed a noble branch of the liberties of this country. We claim it as our birth-right, &c.* This is not to be underſtood of laymen, but only of the clergy; for it is well known that the laity are obliged to ſubmit to the judgment of the clergy becauſe of their ſuperiority. If a layman or any other think it his duty to worſhip God in a manner different from the preſcription of the prieſts, he cannot do it under pain of excommunication. Therefore this glorious privilege of thinking for ourſelves is peculiar to the

clergy,

clergy, elſe it is a non-entity. Witneſs the TEST ACT, the diſgrace of a proteſtant country.

Page 2. *The preſent ſubject will reſt upon the right of ſocieties to fix laws for regulation of their own members, and demand their obedience to thoſe laws.* This is plauſible reaſoning; but the Vindicator, being in ſuch a hurry to juſtify the univerſity, forgot how much like a drum his argument is for emptineſs; for you know if a ſociety is merely a *civil* ſociety its laws are to be made and executed in a dependance upon the laws of the ſtate, and in a ſubſerviency to the good of the common-wealth. But if a ſociety profeſſeth itſelf *Chriſtian*, then can it make no laws without the authority of the great head of the Chriſtian church. Therefore, for the honour of the univerſity, and the better defence of Mr. V— C—, it were to be wiſhed that that learned body would tell us whether they conſider themſelves as only a civil ſociety, or a Chriſtian community; and if they conſider themſelves as the latter, it would be very ſeaſonable to inform us what hand JESUS CHRIST had in giving *Corpus Statutorum Univerſitatis*; whether, like John's baptiſm, it be from heaven, or, like the doctrine of the phariſees, only from men. But I fear, my friends, we are moſt fond of our own *home-made* laws, as being moſt adapted to the purpoſes of prieſtcraft.

Page 3. *This is the only criterion by which we can rightly judge of the merits of the caſe before us. By thoſe ſtatutes which they had ſworn to obſerve they muſt ſtand or fall.* Well, Sirs, what think you? Is not this a home ſtroke upon the authority of the ſcriptures? In former times, before religion became a political engine, it was

uſed

uſed to be ſaid : *To the law and to the teſtimony, for whoſoever walketh not according to this rule it is becauſe there is no light in them* ; but now things are much altered from what they were then, and it ſeems to be right prieſtly language to ſay, To CORPUS STATUTORUM UNIVERSITATIS, *for whoſoever walketh not according to this rule, excluſive of all others, ſhall be expelled the univerſity.* This will account for our pariſh prieſts neglect of the Bible in their preaching, to the ſhutting of the door of knowledge upon the common people ; having at the fountain of learning been taught other rules, yea even bound by ſolemn oath (as the learned Vindicator ſays, p. 2.) to obſerve another rule of doctrine and manners.

The only criterion. There's for you. The New Teſtament is no criterion with Mr. Vindicator, it ſeems ; but ſtill I fear the laity will think, that obedience to the New Teſtament is well nigh as laudible as obedience to *Corpus Statutorum* ; for they cannot be brought to give up the Bible with ſuch a prieſtly willingneſs as ſome folks can.

Ibid. *All reaſonings of the innocence of the things in themſelves, which are alledged againſt the members lately expelled from E— Hall, have nothing to do with the ſubject, and only ſerve to beat the minds of a party.* Such an aſſertion as this has need of the authority of an A. M. or even D. D. before it ventures abroad, becauſe *common ſenſe* will be ſure to find out its rottenneſs. It is no matter, you ſee, whether the things laid to the charge of the young men were innocent in themſelves or not, ſeeing they were againſt the ſtatutes. The bare ſuppoſition of innocence

innocence in caſe of a breach of the ſtatutes, inſinuates a poſſibility of their being in ſome caſes different from the rule of right, which, if granted, diveſts *Corpus Statutorum* of all its authority to decide in any matter. Therefore the venerable Vindicator rather overſhot himſelf in this; but we muſt impute that to the embarraſſments he was under, as you know it is no eaſy matter to vindicate every act of ſome gentlemen, and of courſe ſome grains of allowance muſt be made. After all, was I to ſee a priſoner going to the pillory or to T——n, I ſhould think it a query of ſome moment, whether he was guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, and whether theſe crimes in the nature of things actually deſerved ſuch a puniſhment.

Ibid. *It was neceſſary to premiſe, that the whole proceeding was in conſequence of a regular information to the Vice Chancellor, &c.* A thing very common and eaſy to be obtained againſt people who make conſcience of praying to God in a private houſe; for your people who do not love praying themſelves, cannot endure thoſe who do. Many inſtances of this might be produced from the caſes of Daniel, Jeſus, and his apoſtles, all as regular as this can be; therefore, if we have nothing better than a regular information to vindicate theſe proceedings, I fear much that our cauſe will fall into the puddle.

Well, now we come to the charge againſt them, according to our reverend Vindicator. And conſidering his near affinity with, and fervent affection for, the Vice Chancellor, and the aſſeſſors of E—— Hall, we cannot ſuppoſe that he has unjuſtly concealed any part of the guilt of the parties expelled.

Page 4. *Firſt, the accuſed members had held or frequented illicit conventicles; ſome not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore; that the offices of Religion were performed by people of the meaneſt ranks and abilities: that they met at a conventicle held in a private houſe within the univerſity, where a ſtay-maker and a woman officiated.*

This word *conventicle* was a great word about a century ago, when the clergy were bleſt with the *tractable* race of STUARTS. Then thoſe people, who would pray extempore, were, like Iſſachar, glad to ſtoop down between two burdens; one impoſed by the king, and another by the clergy; and the dignitaries of the church in thoſe days like ſo many Balaams mounted upon the poor aſſes, and belaboured them, as a late ingenious writer ſays, with the rod of excommunication †. But ſince the death of that indefatigable defender of the church, the great SACHEVEREL, the word conventicle has lain dormant; but now it is awaked in the univerſity, where all names of pious ſlander have their origin to ſupport the old intereſt: though it is feared that it will not take with the populace now, as it uſed to do in former days, the people for theſe laſt glorious reigns of liberty having had time to clear their eyes from the duſt thrown into them by former high church leaders. To the days of popery, or to the days of mungrel religion, are our univerſities indebted for moſt of their ſtatutes, which are the *only* rules for the ſtudents conduct. No wonder therefore, that conventicles ſtand in them ſo gracefully; though it would appear not

† See a late publication, intituled, SERMONS TO ASSES.

a little

a little ſtrange to hear of conventicles in a land *ſtrictly* proteſtant; for in ſuch lands every loyal ſubject has a right to worſhip God according to the dictates of his own conſcience, without being expoſed to *expulſions*, *fines*, or *impriſonment*; or, on account of his religion, being held incapable of *places* of *honour*, *profit*, and *truſt* under the government. But it is undoubtedly otherwiſe in nations where the clergy proteſt againſt the power of the pope, in order to arrogate that to themſelves which they have taken from him. The firſt principle upon which the Reformation was founded, was that every man, profeſſing to believe in the ſcriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, has a right to judge for himſelf in religious matters, without expoſing himſelf to any puniſhment whatever on that account. Whether then our Vindicator and his friends at Oxford can be deemed true proteſtants in heart, ſeeing they deny that liberty to the king's ſubjects, I leave to be determined by ſome body elſe; and, as a benevolent lay-man, would adviſe the clergy, for the ſake of their own reputation, to diſuſe the word conventicle till times wheel about to a more favourable point, for I ſhould be ſorry to ſee contempt poured upon the princes of our Iſrael.

I ſhall not diſpute the point with the reverend Vindicator, what is deemed by *Corpus Statutorum*, &c. to be an illicit conventicle; this I ſhall leave to an abler hand; but would rather content myſelf with what common ſenſe and proteſtant principles ſay of the caſe; and theſe deem it little leſs than blaſphemy, to brand the worſhip of God, when offered in ſincerity, with ſuch names of infamy, even if the worſhippers ſhould in ſome things be

miſtaken, notwithſtanding there may be a ſanction for ſuch infamous proceedings found in ſome old ſtatutes unrepealed.

Some of the greateſt fathers in the church were found to frequent conventicles, and to worſhip God in private houſes, and that without their place of meeting being certified to the biſhop of the dioceſe. I would quote an inſtance or two, if I thought that ſo much ſcripture would not be offenſive to the VINDICATOR. The firſt is in Acts ii. 49. where we find the firſt chriſtians BRAKE BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE. That is, adminiſtered the ſacrament (ſo called) in private houſes; and if you conſider the time when this was done, you'll find thoſe houſes could not all be licenſed.

A ſecond inſtance we have in Acts xii. 12. where many were gathered together, praying in a private houſe, namely in the houſe of Mark's mother. It may be urged indeed, that they were obliged to meet in private houſes for worſhip in thoſe days, becauſe the Jewiſh clergy kept all the public houſes or ſynagogues for their own uſe: but this is the very caſe at this day, clergymen who are bound on oath to preach and pray by book, keep all the publick houſes or churches for their own uſe; therefore, thoſe who are inclined to preach and pray *extempore*, are obliged to do it in private houſes or conventicles; and it is rather hard to hinder them ſo to do.

Upon the whole, it is pretty evident that there is a wide difference betwixt the ſentiments of the apoſtles, and thoſe of Mr. V—— C———r, and brethren; for the former frequented and preached in conventicles, and the latter expelled from the univerſity for ſo doing. Yea, we find in the laſt

caſe,

caſe, that the Almighty did not diſdain to hear their prayers, even though they were offered in a conventicle. But if the Moſt High were governed by ſuch motives as frequently influence ſome men, conventicle prayers had certainly vaniſhed into air, and would never have reached the gracious throne. But he is God, and not a clergyman.

There is a ſecond particular in the firſt charge, as I have it from the learned Vindicator, and that is, *ſome not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore.* This I verily believe, ſo far as relates to the point of *orders*; for there is but too much reaſon to fear, that the far greater part who do pretend to preach or expound the ſcriptures, do it without orders. But then it ought to be obſerved, that there are orders from two different quarters. 1ſt. There are orders from the court of heaven, which every gentleman profeſſes to my lord biſhop to be inveſted with ere he can obtain ordination. 2d. His lordſhip's orders, which, according to the original deſign of the inſtitution, was to follow upon, and not precede the former. It is not difficult to prove, that many take upon them to preach without receiving orders from heaven, as appears from their backwardneſs to perform paſtoral duties, feeding at the altar, but leaving it to others to do the office of a prieſt. Such gentlemen may ſuſtain very venerable characters in life, but how they will manage it in death I pretend not to ſay: ſome people fear they may hear the report which Abraham made to the libertine in the Goſpel, which if they do it will make both their ears to tingle. Some of theſe indeed have not the happineſs of obtaining a benefice that will

will enable them to preach by proxy, and very many are obliged to put up with a curacy, and all their days continue underlings. The many pariſhes, the inhabitants of which are uninſtructed even in the firſt principles Chriſtianity, prove it to demonſtration, that their parſons received not their orders from heaven; therefore ſo far I agree with the learned VINDICATOR. Further, there be many who cannot perſuade themſelves that my lord biſhop has the authority he pretends to, ſuppoſing that the offices of an apoſtle and a lord b——p differ in reality, as much from one another as the practice of the latter differeth from that of the former; and therefore they do not chuſe to ſubmit to epiſcopal ordination, but preach without being in orders, as the Vindicator obſerves. But what could this be to the young men who were expelled, provided none of them preached without orders? and *their* doing ſo is not expreſt in the charge, though I think the Vindicator might intend it to be underſtood of them; but this I cannot ſuſpect from the charge itſelf as exhibited in the vindication, but from his after-reaſoning upon it. However, it is not eaſy to account for the conduct of ſome people, eſpecially when they have a bad cauſe to defend. And I, for my part, would never have dared to take a clergyman by the ſkirt, if I had not known the prunella to be rotten. But for the honour of the univerſity it is to be wiſhed, that the Vindicator had been a little more cautious, page 8, and not betrayed ſuch weakneſs as is enough to make even a *barber* to bluſh.

Well, we ſhall ſuppoſe that *ſome* of them as the *Vindicator* ſays, or *one* of them as *Dr. Oxonienſis* ſays, had preached without orders, muſt it from thence

thence follow, that all muſt be expelled, ſeeing the very charge itſelf tacitly acknowledgeth that they were not all guilty?

But ſuppoſing they had all preached in this conventicle—what then? *Why they were then guilty of a flagrant breach of the 23d article of the church, in preaching without being in orders.* Page 8. The Article runs thus: "*It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of* PUBLIC PREACHING, *or miniſtering the ſacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and ſent to execute the ſame.*" This late convert to the church deſigns this article to prove that the ſix young men had broken their ſubſcription engagements. But alas! for want of a tolerable acquaintance with the articles, he has brought it in only to ſhew the wretched ſhifts that people are obliged to fly to, to ſupport arbitrary and oppreſſive proceedings. Nothing is ſaid in the 23d article, but about PUBLIC *preaching and miniſtering the ſacraments in the* CONGREGATION. Now if theſe young men actually did ſo, then were they guilty of a flagrant breach of the article; but if they did not ſo, how ſhall we account for this aſſertion, otherwiſe than by imputing it to inattention, and overheated zeal for HIGH CHURCH, which muſt at all events be ſupported, though it ſhould be even at the expence of truth and common honeſty? But the charge itſelf leaves us to ſuppoſe, that this preaching and praying extempore was not performed without orders in public houſes or churches, but in a conventicle or private houſe, namely a *ſtaymaker's*, therefore cannot be called *public preaching in the congregation*, and conſequently no breach of the 23d article. This might have paſſed without notice probably, if the words

words *public preaching* had not been printed in italics to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt: what thoughtleſſneſs was here, ſeeing thoſe very words clear the ſix young men from the charge of breaking the 23d article! Our reverend Vindicator may aſſure himſelf, that the articles of the church will not be concerned in ſuch a dirty affair; for they no where forbid people to meet together, and converſe about the things of religion, or to exhort one another while it is called today, or to pray with, and for one another, &c.

But they *prayed extempore in this aſſembly, in breach of the 2d article in the 36th canon, which declares, That the book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God, and* THAT IT MAY LAWFULLY BE SO USED; *and that I myſelf will uſe the form in the ſaid book preſcribed, in public prayer, and adminiſtration of the ſacraments, and* NONE OTHER.

The learned Vindicator would have us to underſtand, that by this canon all extempore prayer is utterly prohibited; and that theſe ſix young men, having ſubſcribed this article, could not with a good conſcience pray extempore, nor by any form whatſoever beſides the book of Common Prayer. Therefore exclaims, page 9. *How men, who would ſeemingly affect to be thought conſcientious, can, after ſuch ſubſcription, deviate ſo widely ſeems amazing; but to ſee ſuch men, who have ſo deviated, held up to the public as martyrs and ſufferers in the cauſe of religion, muſt ſtrike all honeſt and ſenſible men, not only with aſtoniſhment, but with horror.* Here is a large fabric indeed. But ſuffer me a little to feel the pillars upon which it ſtands; however I ſhould do it gently,

for if I handle them roughly it will tumble down as the horns of Dagon did, not much to the honour of the VINDICATOR, a gentleman whom I would not willingly offend.

But if we muſt take the canon in his ſenſe of it; and who ſo likely to know its true meaning as he? it would ſubject us to ſome little inconvenience. For inſtance, he judiciouſly obſerves, *every ſtudent at matriculation ſubſcribes the three articles in the 36th canon, and takes the oath for obſerving the ſtatutes* of the univerſity. The ſecond of which articles binds a man to uſe *no other* form of prayer but that in the book of Common Prayer. Let it be here obſerved, that all Companions to the Altar, all the Weeks Preparations, Whole Duties of Man, and all occaſional prayers for faſt days, days of thankſgiving, &c. are expreſly againſt the ſecond article of the canon, and therefore every officiating clergyman in the kingdom breaks the canon law, becauſe they uſe other forms beſides the Common Prayer. Well then, the ſix young gentlemen need not become melancholly for want of company. However I can tell you, that the bookſellers find their account in the eſteemed orthodoxy of many other forms of prayers beſides the Common Prayer, and therefore we never ſhall get them to ſubſcribe to this gentleman's opinion, that none other are to be uſed.

Every one takes the oath for the obſerving the ſtatutes of the univerſity; the ſtatutes of the univerſity enjoin the ſtricteſt obſervance of the canons; the canons prohibit all prayer beſide the uſe of the book of Common Prayer; the clergy do at certain times make uſe of prayers at pence a piece not to be found in the book of Common

Prayer; *ergo*, the clergy break their matriculation oath in ſo doing, though they do it by royal authority. Ah! what has our Vindicator been doing, but fulfilling that ſaying of a great layman, *a fooliſh ſon is the heavineſs of his mother*. For ſhame, ſirs! that this learned gentleman ſhould, in his zeal for the univerſity, advance a propoſition attended with conſequences ſo unfavourable to the eſtabliſhed church and her ſons. Let me adviſe him before he writes another vindication, to ſpend a conſiderable time in acquainting himſelf with the doctrine of conſequences, that he may not open one door of reproach whilſt he attempts to ſhut another; for nobody will believe that the article referred to is to be underſtood in a ſenſe which lays a clergyman under a neceſſity either of perjuring himſelf or diſobeying ſuperior powers; which muſt be the caſe, if it not only prohibits extempore prayer, but every other form of prayer beſides the book of Common Prayer, ſeeing certain occaſions call for other forms.

Another inconvenience would attend this ſenſe of the article; and that is, a perſon, thus ſubſcribing, might find himſelf in ſuch circumſtances, in which no other part of the book of Common Prayer might be exactly ſuited to his caſe; wherefore in this ſituation he muſt either uſe ſome other prayer, or not pray at all; to ſuppoſe the latter is inconſiſtent with the remoteſt idea of the proteſtant faith, and therefore the former muſt be admitted. A man may be in a ſituation where he could not have time to ſeek out a prayer in the legal form, nor ſpare his hands to hold a book: ſuppoſing for inſtance, he was in danger of drowning, would it be deemed a breach of the canon, if without book he ſhould cry,

" *Save,*

"*Save, Lord, I periſh?*" Or, ſuppoſing a man ſhould loſe his eyes, or be caſt where he could not obtain a prayer book, muſt he be deemed a tranſgreſſor, if in ſuch caſe he ſhould even pray extempore? It is not my buſineſs to enquire at preſent from whence our prayer-makers derived their authority; but would juſt obſerve, that the C——y are ſo exceedingly ſet againſt extempore prayer is not to be wondered at, ſeeing ſo few of them are capable of exerciſing themſelves therein; and they know that if others were allowed, it muſt be greatly to their diſgrace, as the profeſt *ambaſſadors* of CHRIST and *plenipotentiaries* of HEAVEN.

But will the right learned author of the vindication give a layman liberty a little to wipe off the dirt, which, in his hurry of thought, he hath inadvertently caſt upon art. 2, canon 36, which, ſo far as concerns the matter in debate, I ſhall cite in his own words? *I myſelf will uſe the form in the ſaid book preſcribed, in* PUBLIC PRAYER *and* ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT, *and* NONE OTHER.

Let me aſk this *friendly gentleman*, what he really thinks is intended by public prayer in this article? Whether he really thinks, that conventicle prayer in private houſes is intended? and if conventicle prayer in private houſes is not there intended, how is it, in the name of honeſty and common ſenſe, that theſe ſix young gentlemen are guilty of a breach of that article, ſeeing that they are charged with no prayer, but that performed in a conventicle, in a private houſe, notwithſtanding their very enemies were their accuſers and judges? Does not the Vindicator in this diſplay his clerical

powers, and discover what he would do, if he could? This is something like swallowing a camel, a thing which some people can do much easier than others can swallow a gnat.

It would be ridiculous to suppose a member of the famous university of OXFORD *ignorant* that *public prayer* always intends that which is made in the church assemblies, and not that prayer which is offered up to God in a private meeting of christian friends; or, how should the administration of the sacraments be joined with it in the article? The subscribing of this article therefore is neither more nor less than an engagement to abide by the Common Prayer Book in every part of public worship where prayer is instituted; but with respect to personal, family, or fellowship worship, the subscriber is left at liberty by the article, though not by the clergy. I think therefore the clergy are more against extempore prayer than the articles and canons, for a very good reason before given, namely, want of capacity for it in themselves.

I am confronted at the bottom of page 9. with an odd sort of a speech, considering by whom it was made. *But to see men, who have so deviated, held up to the public, as martyrs and sufferers in the cause of religion, and that too by a man of Mr. Whitfield's public character, &c.* A character, however, which our learned and very reverend Vindicator endeavours to daub a little with infamy; infamy! such as is thought *must strike every honest and temperate man with astonishment and* HORROR. Page 10. Vind. I cannot, however, but approve of the Vindicator's prudence in chusing to have a fling at this gentleman's character, rather than

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to attempt to anſwer his letter to Dr. Durell, which he could not but ſee to be far beyond his match.

Held forth as MARTYRS. I confeſs I love to meet with a blunder now-and-then, when I read the works of learned men, becauſe it helps to keep me, who am but a SHAVER, in countenance, when I meet with blunders in my own; but I hate to be troubled with ſo many as I meet with in this little performance: for this reaſon, I humbly beg that Mr. V— C— will not ſuffer any more of his Vindicators to print their performances till he himſelf has thoroughly peruſed them; as there is no truſting every gownſman in print, and we readers cannot have while to ſet every thing ſtrait, which we meet with crooked, in the courſe of our reading.

MARTYRS, i. e. murdered or put to death for the ſake of truth. Well done, parſon! Pray, when or where did Mr. Whitfield hold them forth as murdered or put to death? He knows very well, that however ſome gownſmen might delight in ſuch work, that for the preſent it is out of their power, therefore he has not once hinted it.

MARTYRS and SUFFERERS for the cauſe of religion. You will obſerve, that firſt they were MARTYRED, and then they SUFFERED. Some people would have ſuppoſed, that martyrdom was the *finis* of their ſufferings, as in former caſes, and not to precede their other ſufferings.

Sufferers for the cauſe of truth they have been repreſented, and that juſtly, and the contrary does not appear as yet from this vindication. For inſtance, they ſuffered for uſing extempore prayer, as the Vindicator owns; ex-

tempore

tempore. prayer was uſed by Chriſt and his apoſtles; and it is thought that they would have been expelled too had they lived in this formal age.

A third thing in the firſt charge, page 4. ſeems not altogether unworthy of our notice; namely, *That the offices of religion were performed by people of the meaneſt ranks and abilities.* That this is true muſt be granted by all who have any acquaintance with the roots from whence many of the clerical ſlips are grown. Many a reverend parſon in England is deſcended of parents, who could not have afforded him an education to fit him for a country ſhop-man, who, but for *free ſchools, &c.* muſt even have been brought up to ſome low mechanical buſineſs, which ſome of their preſent reverences have actually been imployed in, and after ſuch employment have taken their degrees in the univerſity of Oxford. Inſtances of which I can give, if neceſſary. But then it muſt be owned, that they are ſuch, who, I believe, never took upon them to pray extempore, either in public or private houſes, the former of which are very familiar to ſome of them.

Touching the abilities of many clergymen; I can only ſay, that for the honour of the clergy it were to be wiſhed, that by their regard to the natural abilities of the candidate for orders, they would endeavour to reverſe that old proverbial ſaying, uſed in the country, viz. *that if a lad is ever ſuch a dunce, if he has good friends he will do very well for a parſon.* And really it ſeems as if we had a recent proof of this in the vindication before us. And now I am upon this ſubject, I will even tell you, that

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the reaſon aſſigned by many a ſenſible old woman in the country, why ſo many clergymen do not attempt to preach frequently to their flocks, is the very thing alledged in the charge, *the meanneſs of their abilities*. And if the gentlemen concerned have got ever a better reaſon to aſſign, I adviſe them to do it; otherwiſe the old women will go on with their ſtory. For my own part, when I have gone with the reſt of my neighbours for *pleaſure* or for *forms-ſake* to church on a Sunday, I have not a little admired the courage of the parſon, who could pretend to preach under the diſadvantage of ſuch low abilities. I inſtance theſe things to confirm the truth of the charge.

It cannot be thought that our learned *Vindicator* means that any of thoſe ſix young gentlemen performed the offices of religion in that conventicle; for this gentleman himſelf tells us that it was a *ſtay-maker* and a *woman* who officiated there, page 4; and in page 10 he repreſents them as *learners of this ſtay-maker and old woman*. Therefore, what had they to do with this? or, with what propriety could they be expelled on account of the old woman's preaching?

Now if the Vindicator means that the ſtay-maker is a perſon of the loweſt rank, I can tell him he had beſt eat his words before they come to the ears of the ladies, on whoſe good graces his preferment greatly depends; and they will certainly conclude with me, that a ſtay-maker is at leaſt upon a level with a gown and caſſock-maker, therefore will conſider this as an inſult offered to their ladyſhips. Or, if his reverence means that this preaching woman is of

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the meaneſt rank, I muſt tell him, that he miſſeth his mark; for it is ſaid, there are a ſet of ladies in Oxford, with whom many ſtudents are intimately acquainted, of a rank much inferior to hers, and of an employment very different from preaching.

Page 10. *I ſhall not* CONDESCEND *to ſay much about what theſe worthy babes of grace might learn from the pious and inſtructing expoſitions of a ſtay-maker and an old* WOMAN. If his reverence refer to the arts and ſciences, it is thought they could learn but little; but if he means true religion, it is deemed not impoſſible for them to learn more of ſome old women than they could have learned of all the doctors of the U——y; for it is pretty evident, that their ſtudying divinity under the direction of an old woman, was owing to thoſe whoſe place it was to have inſtructed them therein, being unacquainted with the ſubject as much as the old woman was unacquainted with the original languages. However, I muſt remind his reverence that the eloquent Apollos condeſcended to be *taught the law of the Lord more perfectly*, even by an old woman, called *Priſcilla*.

I ſhall not ſay much about what theſe babes of grace might learn, &c. This is the greateſt, if not the only inſtance of prudence which I have met with in this little vindication; for which every perſon of common ſenſe muſt give him due honour; for as a royal philoſopher once ſaid, *even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe*; and it is well known that the moſt laudable way of concealing our ignorance of a ſubject is *to ſay nothing about it.* And if this *ſincere well-wiſher to the univerſity* had invariably

riably followed this rule, he would have ſaved me the trouble of obſerving, that, in the little which he hath condeſcended to ſay upon this ſubject, he hath ſaid conſiderably more than is true, as I ſhall ſhew by and by; mean while obſerve,

I ſhall not CONDESCEND. There is buckram for you! True prieſtly dignity, as different from the *lowly* conduct and commands of the *condeſcending* Jeſus, as heaven is from hell. However, in this truly clerical greatneſs, the venerable Vindicator only imitates his betters, who are ſo ſwelled with worldly greatneſs, that they will not *condeſcend* to converſe familiarly with the poor of the flock about death, judgment, and eternity; notwithſtanding, for the ſake of a living, they are become accountable for the very ſouls they diſdain to converſe with, becauſe their birth and fortune does not intitle them to the rank of gentlemen. The reaſon why the Apoſtles did not think themſelves above the meaneſt of the people, I ſuppoſe might be, becauſe their own *birth and education did not give them the rank of gentlemen*—a qualification for the univerſity which our ſix young men are likewiſe ſaid to be deſtitute of. When Chriſt was upon earth with his people he did not ſee it proper to employ gentlemen in his ſervice, but choſe his miniſters out of the *loweſt ranks of the people*, to perform all the offices of religion, a thing complained of in the firſt charge againſt the delinquents: but now the univerſity having taken the management of the church into their own hands, they govern it by laws which he never had any hand in making, and impoſe gentlemen upon him whether he will or not.

And indeed, though this does not at all appear requiſite to the proſperity of the goſpel, yet it is highly neceſſary to the dignity of the clergy, a thing which muſt have the preference with ſome of us.

The ſame page has, *we all know that it is not only at a ſadler's at Oxford, but among all* DENOMINATIONS OF ENTHUSIASM, *that old women expound, preach, and adminiſter the other offices of the church.*

What diſadvantages, alas! we illiterate people labour under in compariſon of the academicks; for I never till now heard of more denominations of enthuſiaſm than one, and that one has long been in no ſmall reputation with more ſorts of people than ſome folks are aware of. I have indeed without any advantages out of the reach of a lay-man, heard of a plurality of enthuſiaſts; but heretofore have underſtood enthuſiaſm as the one denomination of enthuſiaſm; but I rather think, that our author meant denominations of enthuſiaſts, only miſtook the word for want of referring to Bailey's dictionary. I ſhould like to know in his next *vindication* how many denominations of enthuſiaſm, or enthuſiaſts there are, and what their names, that I may pay my reſpects to the *old ladies*; their PARSONS. It can be no difficulty for him to inform me; for he ſays, that *all the clergy know this, that old women do preach among them, and adminiſter the other offices of the church.* Should he mean all *his readers*, he is certainly beyond the line of truth, for I am one who do not know them, and I think I can point out a very reputable body of enthuſiaſts, among whom old women, properly ſo called, are not ſuffered to preach;

preach; but all the offices of the C—— are performed by old women of the maſculine gender. My friend the Vindicator has an unhappy way of ſpeaking more than he means, and writing more than he intends to be underſtood. He ſays, that we all know that *old women do not only expound, and pray, and preach, but adminiſter the other offices of the church.* And I obſerve, that as we all know this ſo well a few inſtances of it may be required to ſupport the veracity of the vindication, which appears to be in a tottering condition. O rare Vindicator! what will you not ſay to ſerve a friend?

Being led to diſcuſs this illuſtrious ſubject by the learned Vindicator, who is ſo unmannerly towards our female preachers, I ſhall beg leave to relate a ſtory, the truth of which his reverence may depend upon. I was once in company with a learned clergyman at Ben. Maſon's, a neighbouring farmer, who treated the parſon and I with a cup of his harveſt beer, when who ſhould come in, think you, but one of theſe preaching old women, who ſoon began to ſcrape acquaintance with her brother in black, which utterly ſpoiled our converſation, for the parſon and I were converſing very freely about the news, &c. but nothing would ſerve this female preacher but religion muſt be introduced. The parſon did what he could, indeed, to divert the converſation into a more agreeable channel; but the old woman would have her own way, a thing not uncommon with others of that ſex; in conſequence of which, a diſpute aroſe between the he and ſhe preachers, the iſſue of which proved to all preſent, that the old woman was by a great deal the better divine. Now to

diſmiſs this ſubject, let me adviſe my good friend the clergyman, ere he attempts to draw out his pen againſt a woman a ſecond time, though the conduct of his ſuperiors ſhould even ſtand in great need of a vindication, to read with attention a learned diſſertation upon old women, wrote by Thomas Gordon, Eſq; of ſavoury memory with the clergy; and I dare aſſure him, that thereby he will learn more than he ſeems to have done by all the lectures he has attended at the univerſity, and obtain a more reſpectable knowledge of that maternal race of fair preachers.

So much for the firſt charge againſt the ſix methodiſts. Let us now attend to the ſecond charge.

II. *Some of them had been bred up to, and had exerciſed the loweſt of trades, were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the ſtatutable exerciſe of the univerſity, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders.* Page 5. Vindication. That theſe are not very villainous crimes, we have the Vindicator's own judgment to teſtify, pag. 11. although, *theſe charges of themſelves might not be thought ſufficient grounds for expulſion, there was a very high impropriety, it muſt be allowed, in their firſt admiſſion.* And ſome people will think that this charge does not need ſuch a pen as mine to turn it away, ſeeing it will fall to pieces of itſelf, even if let alone. It pains me to ſee the author, compoſer, and exhibiter of this charge, to have acted with ſo little caution, as to have given the lye to the great Dr. Oxonienſis, a gentleman upon whom I have conferred ſome

honours already, and to whom I have promiſed more, as I ſhall ſhew by and by; but now I ſhall attend to the charge itſelf.

SOME *of them had been bred to, and exerciſed the loweſt trades*; SOME of them, *not* ALL of them. And yet ALL of them were expelled, becauſe SOME *of them had been bred to, and exerciſed the loweſt of trades*, and this is thought to be agreeable to the ſtatute in ſuch caſe provided. Here is juſtice heaped and running over! The numerous readers of my excellent ſermon, intitled PRIESTCRAFT DEFENDED, will remember the weighty reaſons I aſſigned againſt the *blackſmiths*, the *publican*, and the *Teacher under W——y*, and why they ought to have been expelled the univerſity; and have only to obſerve now, that the Vindicator does not do cleverly in calling thoſe the *loweſt* of *trades*, ſeeing there be and have been trades as low as theſe. For inſtance, there is

1ſt. The trade of *tent-making*, to which the apoſtle Paul had been bred, and which he had exerciſed before he went to the univerſity at Jeruſalem; and although the Jewiſh clergy were very ſenſible of their ſuperiority over others, the Vice Chancellor of that univerſity, and the aſſeſſors of that hall to which Paul belonged, and Dr. Gamaliel the learned preſident, never attempted to expel him on account of his having been a tent-maker, notwithſtanding ſome of them afterwards became his perſecutors, not for *tent-making* indeed, but for preaching the goſpel. In this, therefore, the Jewiſh clergy were rather more moderate than the O——d prieſts.

Moreover,

Moreover, after this ſame Paul was become an apoſtle, he followed his trade of tent-making, and wrought with his own hands, rather than be burdenſome to the poor believers for ſo much as a *tythe-pig*. *He worked with his own hands*. He was not like many who pretend to be a-kin to him, who eat the fat and drink the ſweet, at the great expence of the people, and in return hardly preach once in twelve months: thoſe are drones; but Paul was an induſtrious workman, both at his trade, and alſo in the word and doctrine; for he choſe to ſpend and be ſpent in the ſervice of the goſpel: but ſome of his pretended kinſmen, though they have all the emoluments of the altar, are ſo much afraid of being ſpent in its ſervice, that they content themſelves with preaching by *proxy*, which you know is very gentleman-like.—But I have ſaid, that Paul was no *gentleman*; and I add now, that he was not only a tradeſman, but a *journeyman*. Not a *journeyman parſon*, but a *journeyman tent-maker*; for he did work with his own hands, which maſter tradeſmen ſeldom care to do, otherwiſe we ſhould have fewer bankrupts than we have. But our great gownſmen neither *work* nor *preach*, and yet they are apoſtolic, and yet they are divinely commiſſioned, and yet they are deſcended of the Apoſtles, and yet there is not the leaſt likeneſs between the Apoſtles and their reverences, and yet they have a divine right to all the profits of the church.

2d. There were fiſhermen; I do not ſay fiſhmongers, the lords of the finny tribes, for that is an high trade; but fiſhermen, which to this day continues one of the loweſt of trades;

and

and yet out of this claſs of people, it pleaſed the Redeemer to chooſe moſt of his Apoſtles; and although we read of gentlemen commoners at the univerſities, yet we do not read of any gentlemen fiſhermen at Yarmouth, &c. The great Maſter of the Apoſtles having no kingdom in this world, and never deſigning his religion to become political, had no need of employing gentlemen to dignify his goſpel, therefore choſe fiſhermen, as moſt ſuitable to the purpoſes he had in view. Neither their birth, education, nor dreſs gave them the rank of gentlemen: all the ranks of the clergy in thoſe days diſtinguiſhed themſelves from the laity by the peculiarity of their dreſs; but it appears not that the dreſs of the Apoſtles differed at all from that of the meaneſt of the people: and yet they prayed, and yet they preached the goſpel, to the great confuſion of the holy trade of prieſtcraft. But times are altered ſince then; and whatever Jeſus Chriſt might have done in his day, the Vindicator obſerves, that our modern clergy will not ſuffer people of the meaneſt ranks, who have been bred to the loweſt trades, to become ſtudents at the univerſity; for six young men were expelled, becauſe *ſome* of them had exerciſed the meaneſt trades. In this, therefore, there is a manifeſt diſcord betwixt the Apoſtles and their reverences. However, this LAD, the Vindicator, was imprudent in alledging that their trades were the loweſt, ſeeing there have been, and ſtill are trades lower than theirs. But boyiſh youth, pride of learning, and hope of preferment, will make a wiſer than he to ſpeak at random.

They

They were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the ſtatutable exerciſe of the univerſity, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders, ſays Mr. Vindicator.

WHOLLY *illiterate*, i. e. could neither read nor write; for a perſon cannot be deemed wholly illiterate, if he has a competent degree of knowledge of his mother tongue; and this is a language which the learned Vindicator does not ſeem perfectly to underſtand himſelf. If the maxim laid down by ſome perſons of eminence is to be regarded, "true learning does not conſiſt in the knowledge of the languages, ſo much as in the knowledge of mankind," we ſhall find many a dunce who underſtands Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, who never was capable of entering into the ſpirit of the writers he has read, and many a learned man who never knew any language beſides his mother tongue. However, our little Vindicator has the effrontery to give the lie to the great Oxonienſis, for which it is well if he himſelf is not in danger of expulſion.

This great man, of whoſe veracity it is dangerous to doubt within the precinct of the univerſity, very gravely tells us in the Gazetteer, and New Daily Advertiſer, April 8. That they *were very illiterate*. But they were *wholly ſo*, ſays the Vindicator. That they were not *wholly* ſo the Rev. Oxonienſis proves from his declaring that they were a *little* acquainted with the Greek. For my part I agree with his reverence, not loving to quarrel with great men, and ſhall leave the Vindicator to take what follows, which may perhaps teach him not to contradict his betters for the future.

future. However, was it even ſo as the boy would have it, that they were wholly illiterate, it is apparent from their conduct that they deſired to learn. Now where in the name of wonder ſhould a thirſty man go but to the fountain? or, where ſhould men go who are imperfect in the languages to attain the comple e knowledge of them, but to the fountain of learning, the univerſity? I can tell our Vindicator that it is not every lad that has the advantage of being trained up in a diſſenting academy, as he had, before he went to the univerſity, notwithſtanding he can *talk now ſo liberally of* CONVENTICLES. TURN-COATS *are always moſt violent.*

It is needleſs for me to attempt a further refutation of this ſecond charge, ſeeing the Vindicator himſelf does not conſider theſe things included in it as ſufficient grounds for expulſion. I ſhall therefore diſmiſs this head, after I have juſt obſerved, that the heads of houſes are very much obliged to this BOY for the friendly admonition he beſtows on them. Page 12. *We may hope this inſtance of an admiſſion of perſons, wholly illiterate, will be a warning to the heads of houſes, &c.* I confeſs, it does not reflect much honour upon the heads of houſes to ſtand in need of reproof from a pert boy, whoſe beard has not ſtrength to reſiſt the ſhaver's razor. It is hoped, therefore, they will not ſubmit to the inſtruction of the gentleman commoner, aged nineteen. And I paſs on to the

III. Charge againſt the ſix young men expelled. I confeſs it is an heavy charge, which, if true, they ought to be expelled from all

Chriſtian ſociety ; for it is no leſs than *that they held the doctrines of* METHODISM, *viz. That faith without works is ſufficient to ſalvation :—that there is no neceſſity of good works ;—that the immediate influence of the ſpirit is to be waited for :—that once a child of God, and always a child of God. Theſe, I preſume, make no part of the doctrines of the church of England.* It is ſomething unlucky for our Vindicator, that the doctrine of the Methodiſts is ſo well known, that the greateſt part of his few readers will conſider this as a fib ; but who would not fib for the good of the cauſe ? And who that has a penny to catch would not be upon the ſide of the ſtrongeſt party, and bait piety under the name of phrenzy, like the hungry authors of many a performance ? But let us a little enquire into the truth of this charge, as made by the Vindicator.

They held the doctrines of PURE *Methodiſm*, page 12. But really, if the ſyſtem of methodiſm contains ſome doctrines charged upon the young men, it cannot be remarkable for its purity. It were, however, to be wiſhed, that learned men would not utterly forget that old moral precept, which enjoins us *to do to others what we would on an exchange of circumſtances wiſh them to do to us :* this precept once on a day gained the admiration of a Pagan emperor, notwithſtanding it was given in that old book called the New Teſtament, ſo little known to ſome learned men, and ſo much deſpiſed by others. Had this rule of equity and candour been obſerved, our author would not have aſſerted, that the *Methodiſts* held that *there is no neceſſity of good works.* However, it hath been

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the way of the prieſts, from the beginning of the goſpel, to miſrepreſent the faith and practice of thoſe who differed from them. Did not I do well then to ſhew you the perfect harmony among the Babyloniſh, Jewiſh, Roman, and O——d clergy? and I fancy I ſhall have occaſion to join to the liſt another very reſpectable fraternity, whoſe perſons, parts, and principles are to be held in great eſtimation, and who hitherto have been without any mark of diſtinction conferred on them by the SHAVER.

I. They held, *that faith without works is ſufficient to ſalvation:* ſo ſays our Vindicator, and aſſerts that *this is one of the doctrines of Methodiſm.* With men of letters and prieſtly reverence this bold aſſertion may paſs for proof; nay, I know not how orthodox it may be held even in a C——n; but, amongſt laymen and country women, the redundancy of whoſe learning has not quite deſtroyed their common ſenſe, and whoſe attachment to the clergy has not as yet abſorbed their regard to equity, it will require ſomething like proof, before it is believed. And in behalf of laymen and old women, I would moſt humbly beg, that the learned Vindicator would *condeſcend* to give an inſtance or two in favour of this aſſertion, That *faith without works is ſufficient to ſalvation* makes no part in the doctrine of Methodiſm; notwithſtanding, from the *idleneſs* of many of the clergy, it appears to be the dependance of not a few gentlemen of the ſacred order, who are well paid for believing, without attempting much work. Really it would not be amiſs for the gentlemen parſons, who have been regularly educated, and the Methodiſt preachers who are ſaid to be ſo erroneous, to

come forth fairly to the light, and make a ſtrict compariſon of notes together, in point of induſtry in the work of the miniſtry, regularity in their converſation, benevolence of diſpoſition, and works of mercy towards their fellow creatures; and as faith is beſt known by the fruits it produceth, let thoſe be deemed the Hereticks and Infidels who have not thoſe good works attending them, let them profeſs what faith they pleaſe.

To ſerve the preſent turn, like my brother authors, let me propoſe the following caſe to the conſideration of my judicious readers, and many of them I am likely to have, to the no ſmall mortification of ſomebody. There are a ſet of gentlemen, who are thought to know their Maſter's will, and are well paid for doing it; *but do it not*: and there are another ſet of men, who are very active and diligent in what they take to be their Maſter's will, but are thought in ſome caſes to be miſtaken: which of the two ſhall we think to be the beſt Chriſtians? It is ſomewhat abſurd to plead for good works, unleſs a man has got ſome to ſhew; for till once it appears that the clergy are laborious in the work of the miniſtry, we ſhall always find good works on the ſide of the Methodiſts; notwithſtanding, in this preſent ſtate of imperfection, we ſhall find them, like all other claſſes of people, attended with ſome defects.

But to attend to the point in queſtion, Whether the Methodiſts in general hold that *faith without works is ſufficient to ſalvation?* If by ſalvation our Vindicator means *juſtification, pardon of ſin, and acceptance with God*, the Methodiſts hold, and he is an Infidel who holds not, that believers *are juſtified freely by his grace*,

grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus, Rom. iii. 24. *And that to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* And that the man is *bleſſed unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs* without *works*, Rom. iv. 5, 6. On the account of ſuch ſayings the Methodiſts and every Chriſtian believes, that juſtification dependeth not on works, but merely on grace; and if the Scriptures, on account of the diſuſe of them, are not thought ſufficient to eſtabliſh a point of ſuch grand importance, we have the *Rule of Faith* ſubſcribed to by every parſon of the Church of England to keep us in countenance.

Art. XI. An article which looks exceſſively aukward upon the Vindicator's treatment of the Methodiſts, who hold that "Good works can-"not precede juſtification, therefore can by no "means be the cauſe of it, and that they are "utterly unconcerned therein." The article is the very ſame, and therefore it is methodiſm, and the Vindicator is a Methodiſt for ſubſcribing it; for it ſays, *We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour by faith, and not for our own works or deſervings; wherefore, that we are juſtified by faith only is a moſt wholſome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expreſs'd in the homily of juſtification.* This doctrine is abſolute Methodiſm, and yet it ſtands in the articles; and yet it is ſubſcribed by all who have a benefice in view; and yet they are Hereticks and Schiſmaticks who hold it, and muſt be expelled the univerſity.

Learn hence, that if you hold it not, your ſubſcribing of it brings you into the way of

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preferment; but to hold what you ſubſcribe is the very way to expulſion.

The *Bible*, the *Articles* and *Homilies* of the *Church* of *England*, and every Chriſtian, holdeth, along with the Methodiſts, that juſtification is independant upon any works of the party juſtified; but to ſay that the Methodiſts hold that good works are not neceſſary in the Chriſtian life, is a low, mean, and pitiful ſlander, which neither the Vindicator nor his abettors are capable of proving. And though I have not the honour of wearing a gown, and conſequently am no gentleman, I humbly beg that their reverences of the univerſity would offer ſome proof to the Public, who want this aſſertion to be cleared up, the bare word of a prieſt being thought ſomewhat inſufficient, having loſt much of its weight within this laſt century. And till that is done, I ſhall be bold enough to whiſper in the ear of my very good friend the Public, that if he wants to hear of a faith without works, or works without faith, or to have them ſo confounded that neither of them can be known, he muſt not go to the Lock Chapel, Black Friars, or the Tabernacle; but muſt even attend on ſuch of the doctors of the eſtabliſhed church who never were ſuſpected of Methodiſm, and there he'll have it juſt equal to his wiſh.

But the Methodiſts have no notion of preaching any faith but a living faith, productive of good works where-ever it is planted, as our Vindicator very well knows, if ever he read their many ſermons and other pieces, which have ſo much attracted the attention of the world of late years, to the great concern of many a high clergyman. And that very faith, which

which they conſider as juſtifying faith, they repreſent as the ſpring of all Chriſtian holineſs. And the very reaſon which they give for their looking upon many a well-paid parſon as no more than a dignified Infidel, is becauſe that the parſon's faith does not WORK by love to God and the ſouls of men.

Do not, good gentlemen, I pray you now, talk about good works till ye diſcover more love to the ſouls of the people than to the *tythe of their crops*. Exerciſe yourſelves more in good works, and all good men will have the better opinion of your faith. Diſcover, my worthy rectors, that you have ſome ſenſe of humanity remaining in you by relieving your oppreſſed curates; let them ſhare in the income proportionably to the part they bear in the ſervice of the church. This is a good and equitable work; this is your duty to do, and what they have a right to expect.

Let not a gentleman who, as to learning, virtue, and good ſenſe, is equal with yourſelf, ſtand hat-in-hand before you, as ſo much your inferior, ſeeing he lacks nothing but a patron to make him in all reſpects your equal. It is hard, gentlemen, very hard, that he ſhould do all the drudgery of the trade, and receive little above the tenth of the profit. This is no good work. This argues little in favour of your faith. This cannot be equalled by the conduct of the moſt oppreſſive tradeſman of the lay kind. Therefore, worthy gentlemen, pay the curates their proportion of the tythes and offerings. Convince the Public, reverend worthies, that you have ſome care about their ſouls eternal welfare, by endeavouring to inſtruct the loweſt

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of the people in the knowledge of God's word, if you think that fit to be known; and if you have an unfavourable opinion of that, do teach them a little that people may have no cauſe to ſay they pay their pence for nothing. People will animadvert upon the careleſſneſs of the parſon, whilſt the pariſhioners are never ſought after but for their dues, the receiving of which is in many caſes thought not to be among the good works which are any-way a-kin to a goſpel faith. Look a little then into their ſpiritual eſtate as well as their temporal. Be willing to take a little pains as well as to receive full pay. Do the duties as well as receive the emoluments of the profeſſion. For famiſhing the curate, and letting the people die for lack of knowledge, are works not very amiable.

When ye ſee any neighbouring miniſters more conſcientious, more laborious, and conſequently more uſeful and better followed than yourſelves, do not traduce them as Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, for thereby you only trumpet forth your own infamy, and make yourſelves the mock of conſcientious lay people, who have no other view in religious duties than the intereſt of the Redeemer. Do not let people know the rottenneſs of your foundation, by imprudently diſcovering your fear for the church; for every body knows, that knows the Bible, that no church can be in danger beſides the church of Antichriſt; and all your prieſtly exploſions from the pulpit, when you venture there, all your inveighing againſt your neighbours of a different perſuaſion, only tends to let us laymen into the ſecret; namely, that you are not upon the true foundation. Pay a little more regard to the

Sabbath

Sabbath than heretofore, worthy Sirs. Do not let the people have it to ſay, when they are reproved for Sabbath-breaking, "The parſon "does ſo, and ſo may we." Remember, ye are well paid for keeping up the form of religion, and there is another world beyond this, and there is another judge beſides him in the B—p's court. A judge who will not venerate a man the more for his gown, and who very probably may be ſtrict in his enquiries after what ye have done in return for your tythes and many fees. And I doubt you will find this judge to be more on the ſide of the poor than that of the clergy. Begin then a reformation of your pariſhes in your own families, and do not convince the people that religion is a farce, made uſe of only for the emolument of the prieſt, the mercenary principles of whom we country people account the very ſpring of *atheiſm*. Do not belie your neighbours, good gentlemen, as you uſually do once at leaſt in a year, not much to the honour of holy mother church; but even give the diſſenters, and the very devil his due; and although ye dare not meddle with the latter, yet be propitious to the former; for they are aſſes upon which many of you have ridden to a fat benefice: the tameſt aſſes that ever a clerical Balaam laid his leg over, and therefore ought not to be male-treated, leſt in the iſſue they ſhould aſſume courage enough to bruiſe the foot of the rider againſt the wall.

But where am I going, or what have I been writing? My zeal for the gownſmen has carried me away very far from the point under debate, for which I hope to have a few encomiums given me by my good friends the

Critical Reviewers; to whom I beg my printer to present my compliments through the channel of his press, and my very grateful acknowledgments of the honours they have done me, in classing me with Thomas Brown, Esq; of facetious memory, and the worthy author of the *Midnight Spy*. An honour, I assure you, reader, which they do not confer upon every author they review, no, not even upon all the old standers in the literary canton.

F I N I S.

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